

industry, that drilling is risk free. The people of my home State of Louisiana know these risks better than anyone, both the safety of the rig workers, and to the environment itself. But we also know that America needs 21 million gallons of oil a day to keep this economy moving. Twenty-one million gallons of oil a day are necessary for this economy. This well is leaching right now 5,000. That is less than one-fourth of 1 percent of the oil that is necessary.

So we must continue to drill. For advocates who say we cannot afford to drill off our coast, then what coast should we drill off of? Should we have all of our oil coming, 100 percent, from Saudi Arabia or Venezuela or Honduras or West Africa? We have to take responsibility to drill where we can safely. Out away from our shores is as safe as we can be. We obviously have to improve our technology, and that we will. Retreat, we will not.

Let me give a few more facts, and then I will wrap up my comments. It is more risky to import our oil in tankers than it is to drill for it offshore, even considering this disaster we are dealing with today. According to a report by the National Academy of Sciences, spills from tankers bringing oil in from overseas account for four times as many oil spills as does offshore drilling.

Compared to how much oil we use in this country, the industry spill rate is quite low. Minerals Management Service reports offshore operators have a spill rate of only .001 percent since 1980. That means that 99.99 percent of all oil is produced, transported, and consumed safely.

Again, I am not saying that to minimize this disaster. We know the blowout preventer failed. There may be other safeguards that must be put into place. The investigation will show that. There may be those who need to be held accountable. The investigation will show that as well.

But the fact is, natural seeps introduce as much as 150 times more oil into our oceans than does offshore drilling. I agree we do not want to drill everywhere. I do not think we should drill in Yosemite National Park. I believe there are places such as the Great Lakes and other places potentially off the Atlantic Coast that we should not drill. But using the right amount of buffer zone, whether it is 50 miles, or 35 miles, or 100 miles, using up-to-date technologies, backup blowout preventers, something I am learning about that actually goes on in Norway and other countries, might also reduce these risks even further.

But let me say one more word before I close, a word about revenue sharing. I have been probably the most outspoken advocate in this Senate, and will continue to be, and am proud of my advocacy on the part of coastal States, particularly the States of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, that have been host to this industry for the better part of 75 years.

We have lived through its ups and downs. We have lived through disasters such as this, and periods of relative calm. We have benefitted from the millions of dollars that have benefitted our States indirectly through jobs. But with all that we have done, generating almost \$5 billion in taxes off the Gulf Coast, out of this Gulf Coast, \$5 billion a year comes to the Federal Treasury. The fishermen in Plaquemines Parish, the fishermen in St. Bernard, the schoolchildren in Orleans and in Jefferson have not received one penny, even though in our whole State today, many people along the coast are standing watch to keep this oil spill from our shores.

We have come here time and time again and said, we are proud to be partners in this industry, even today, in the midst of this disaster we still have. But you must understand the risk. We do. And we would like to have a portion of that funding to help us either have the kind of technology in place to invest in our wetlands, to fill up some of these canals that have been left, even as we make the industry reach to higher and better standards. I hope that as people watch this disaster unfold, they will hear again the call of the gulf coast Senators and House Members to allow us to share these revenues in a fair way so we can all benefit from the upside, and most certainly share the downside, as we will do in the next weeks and months ahead.

We are going to continue to monitor, to react, to do everything we can to save the environment, to investigate the accident, to continue to nurture and care for those who are still injured, and to comfort those who have lost members of their family. There is a young mother I spoke to who lost her 21-year-old husband, and will be raising a 3-month-old and a 3-year-old by herself, at least for the foreseeable future. There are many other stories like that. But we are proud to be part of producing the resources this country needs, as we work on technologies to prevent these kinds of disasters in the future. We do not believe that moving this production completely off of our shore is the answer. We do not believe burying our head in the sand and pretending the country does not need 21 million gallons of oil a day, or pretending we can get this energy tomorrow from somewhere else—we may get it somewhere else in 20 or 30 years, but not next week, and not the month after, and not the year after.

So let us be careful in the way we move forward. Let us be measured. Let us be open to hear the facts. Let us hold people accountable for what happened and understand what happened and prevent it again. In the meantime, I know the Coast Guard, the military, Louisiana's agencies, and our local officials are going to do everything we can to protect our people and our environment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

#### MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### DISCLOSE ACT

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, I rise to support the Democracy Is Strengthened by Casting Light On Spending in Elections Act, or the DISCLOSE Act, Senator SCHUMER's bill to fight the effects of the Citizens United decision.

I want to tell Minnesotans listening at home why I support this bill. I want to talk about the problem this bill addresses and how this bill fixes that problem. I also want to talk about a part of this legislation that came from a bill I introduced earlier this year.

A lot of people don't follow the Supreme Court very closely, so I would like to summarize what the Citizens United decision does. In a nutshell, it allows corporations to spend as much money as they want, whenever they want, in any election in this country. It lets corporations spend their shareholder money to do this. What is worse, it will allow foreign subsidiaries, wholly owned by foreign governments, to spend just as much money as their American competitors.

This decision changed our election laws in a radical way. In a single decision, the Supreme Court reversed a century-old legal standard, 2 Federal laws, 24 State laws, including a 20-year-old Minnesota law, and 2 of its own decisions, one of which it handed down just 6 years ago. I am not a lawyer and I don't speak Latin, but unless the term "stare decisis" means "overrule stuff," I think we have an activist court on our hands.

But I don't want to talk about legal precedent; I want to talk about how this decision will affect people's everyday lives. I want to talk about the crisis Citizens United has created for communities; for the safety of our communities and for our ability to run them without a permission slip from big business.

Let me give a couple of examples of policies that might never have been enacted if Citizens United had been the law of the land.

As of 1965, when America's population was about half as large as it is today, 50,000 people died every year from car accidents. Believe it or not, the auto industry knew full well it could prevent a large portion of highway deaths just by installing seatbelts in every car they sold. But as late as the early 1960s, they refused to do that. They said: "Safety doesn't sell." They lobbied against legislation to require seatbelts.